GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1221
ANSWERED ON:07.12.2015
Schools for Mentally Challenged Children
Laguri Smt. Sakuntala

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the enrollment of children with 40 per cent mental retardation is banned in the Government or recognised schools in the country and if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether it is a fact that the mental growth of such type of children is faster if they are placed in the school with normal children and if so, the reaction of the Government thereto; and

(c) the steps taken/ being taken by the Government to ensure enrollment of the said children to Government and recognized schools ?

Answer

MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
(SMT. SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI)

(a): No, Madam.

(b) & (c): Section 3 of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009 provides for free and compulsory education to all children from 6-14 years of age. This also includes children with mental retardation. Section 29 of the Act mentions all round development of the child, building up child's knowledge, potentiality, talent and development of physical and mental abilities to the fullest extent through learning through activities, discovery and exploration in a child friendly and child-centered manner and comprehensive and continuous evaluation of child's understanding of knowledge. Section 30 of the Act states that no child shall be required to pass any Board examination till completion of elementary education.
As per the National Curriculum Framework (NCF-2005), the culture of the school must be one that highlights the students' identities as 'learners' and creates an environment that enhances the potential and interests of each child. All these are steps to foster the mental growth of children with mental retardation in schools with normal children.
National Council for Education Research and Training has prepared handbooks on curricular adaptations for children with visual impairment, hearing impairment, cognitive impairment and intellectual impairment for general teachers at primary and upper primary levels. Till date, 1.58 lakh general teachers have been trained on this material. Besides, 9464 regular teachers were trained in 2014-15 and 5346 were trained in 2015-16 on the needs of children with mental retardation.

Thus, the focus of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) is on inclusive education wherein all children with special needs (CWSN), including children with mental retardation are placed in mainstream schools to promote holistic development of these children. As per Unified District Information System for Education 2013-14 data, 4.91 lakh children with mental retardation are enrolled in regular elementary schools under SSA.

SSA provides Rs. 3000/- per child per annum for assessment, provision of free aids and appliances, teacher training, engagement of resource persons exclusively for CWSN, support services and barrier free access. Similarly, under the component of Inclusive Education for Disabled at Secondary Stage under the integrated Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan 100% central assistance is provided through State government/UT for student oriented assistance at the secondary level.

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